

1912, His opinion of the Irish army was less flattering than Plunket's. It is very hard, he complains, to give an account of the Irish army. The common computation was incredible, for it included the whole nation, ^s every poor country fellow having armed himself with a skeioe as they call it or dagger, or a ropery like a halfpike, weapons fit only to please themselves, or else to put them In a posture of robbing and plundering the whole country, under pretence of suppressing the rebellious Protestants/ These rapparees committed many outrages so that

having overstocked themselves with other men's cattle they destroyed millions throughout the kingdom only for their hides or tallow, and sometimes only to exercise their malice, leaving the carcasses to rot in the fields. Our muster rolls ran high, every officer being quartered near home the better to enable him to raise his men or rather to put it into his power to muster ail the rabble of the country, which when he was to march towards the enemy either he had no right to command or else they deserted. I am an eye-witness that regiments that mustered 700 and upwards at home came not into the field or even to Dublin 400 strong. . . . Our men were newly brought from the mountains^ used to live in slavery without the use of any weapon : the most of them had never fired a musket in their lives. A people used only to follow and converse with cows, so hard to be made sensible of the duty of a soldier or be brought to handle their arms aright, that it was difficult to

make many
of them understand the common words of
command^ much
less to obey them. Besides their natural
uncouthness, they
are stubborn and conceited, to be governed
with rigour and
severity, not to be wrought upon with lenity
and gentleness.
. . . They will follow none but their own
leaders, many of
them men as rude, as ignorant, and as far
from under-
standing any of the rules of discipline as
themselves. This
was the utter ruin of the army. . . . The
commissioned
officer could not punish his sergeant or
corporal because he